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ABSTRACT

Detailing a collaboration between an elementary school teacher and a middle school teacher, this book is about making connections--connections that make learning meaningful for students and teachers. The book describes how the teachers worked to bridge the gap between content area subjects and the gap in their understanding of each other's teaching situations. After a foreword by Jerome C. Harste, part 1 of the book sets the stag by discussing thematic integration, constraints and limitations, and the importance of collaboration. Part 2 discusses how one of the teachers used the theme of "Discoveries on the Outside and the Inside" to integrate the subject disciplines within her self-contained fifth-grade classroom, while immersing her students in colonial life by using reading, writing, simulations, and debates to bring the era to life. Part 3 describes how the sixth-grade teacher and her language arts students step into the lives of characters unlike themselves to explore differences in culture, race, and class. Part 4 discusses what the teachers discovered during their exploration of thematic learning, shows how others can also use their process, and points out classroom and teaching conditions that support inquiry and collaboration. Appendixes present professional resources, student activities, examples of draft and final "Discoveries" reports, "The Computer Connection" by Gerald Crisci, and student book talks. (RS)

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